

J.C. Watts, Jr.
Chairman
4th District, Oklahoma

House Meets at 10:00 a.m. for Legislative Business

Anticipated Floor Action:

H.R. 350—Mandates Information Act

S.Con.Res. 7—Honoring King Hussein of Jordan

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H.R. 350—Mandates Information Act

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to continue considering H.R. 350 as its first order of business today. Last week, the House adopted an open rule and completed general debate on the measure. The rule accords priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. It allows the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes and reduce the voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

Summary: H.R. 350 amends the 1974 Congressional Budget Act (*P.L. 93-344*) to require congressional committees to report on any bill or joint resolution that imposes a federal mandate on the private sector, which must include information from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) regarding to the economic impact that the mandate may have on consumers, workers, and small businesses, including any disproportionate impact on particular regions or industries. Currently, CBO must estimate only the direct costs of all federal private sector mandates that exceed \$100 million, as well as the amount of federal financial assistance to private sector entities provided by the legislation. By requiring that CBO submit such a report, supporters of the measure seek to enhance the ability of the federal government to work with the private sector, while providing means by which Congress can be held more accountable for its legislative mandates. The bill also allows members to raise a point of order against consideration of any legislation that imposes a private sector mandate if it is not feasible for CBO to have submitted an estimate. If such a point of order is raised, it triggers 20 minutes of debate and a separate vote on whether to consider the measure.

The House passed a similar measure last year by a vote of 279-132. The bill introduced by Mr. Condit and was reported by the Rules Committee by voice vote on February 2, 1999.

Views: The Republican Leadership supports passage of the bill. The Clinton Administration strongly opposes the measure and has threatened to veto it.

Amendments: At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following amendments to H.R. 350:

Mr. Boehlert may offer an amendment to change the effect of the point of order established by the bill. Under the bill, if a member raises a point of order against a provision or amendment, the point of order triggers 20 minutes of debate, after which the House must vote on whether to continue debating the bill or amendment under consideration. The Boehlert amendment requires the chair to rule on the point of order. The chair may sustain the point of order if CBO has determined that the measure under consideration will cost the private sector more than \$100 million per year or if CBO has not scored the measure. Under the amendment, if the point of order is sustained the House will debate the costs and benefits of the measure for 20 minutes. The amendment does not include the bill's requirement that the House vote to continue considering the measure. *Staff Contact: David Goldston, x5-3665*

Mr. Waxman may offer an amendment to allow points of order against provisions in legislation that eliminate or lessen the stringency of private sector mandates intended to protect public health, safety, and the environment. *Staff Contact: Greg Dotson, x5-3976*

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #3, February 5, 1999.

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S.Con.Res. 7—Honoring King Hussein of Jordan

Floor Situation: The House is scheduled to consider S.Con.Res. 7 after it completes consideration of H.R. 350. The resolution is debatable for one hour.

Summary: S.Con.Res. 7 honors the life and legacy of King Hussein ibn Talal al-Hashem, the recently deceased monarch of Jordan. Through this resolution, Congress (1) extends its deepest sympathy and condolences to the family of King Hussein and to all the people of Jordan in this difficult time; (2) expresses admiration for King Hussein's enlightened leadership and gratitude for his support for peace throughout the Middle East; (3) expresses its support and best wishes for the new government of Jordan under King Abdullah; and (4) reaffirms the United States' commitment to strengthening the vital relationship between the U.S. and the government and people of Jordan.

King Hussein was born in Amman, Jordan, on November 14, 1935. In August 1952, after his grandfather, King Abdullah, was assassinated and his father, Talal, abdicated the throne, Hussein was proclaimed King of Jordan. Throughout his reign, Hussein—the longest serving head of state in the modern Middle East—was widely viewed as a benevolent monarch and a champion of peace.

In November 1989 King Hussein began the process of moving Jordan to democracy by holding the first parliamentary elections since 1967. Jordan's record on human rights and civil liberties is a model for the region.

He maintained a dialogue with Israel and signed a peace treaty with the Jewish state on October 26, 1994. Indeed, Jordan's relations with Israel are considered a model for Arab-Israeli coexistence, marked by political and cultural relations as well as trade and economic ties. King Hussein, stricken with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, made a dramatic appearance at the Wye Plantation talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. His participation may have saved the talks from collapse.

On February 8, 1999, Hussein succumbed to cancer after his second bone marrow transplant failed. King Hussein's son, Abdullah, assumed the throne to which he was appointed heir on January 25, 1999.

An enrolled copy of this resolution will be given to King Hussein's family. The Senate passed the resolution by unanimous consent on February 8, 1999.

Additional Information: See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVIII, #3, February 5, 1999.

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